



Washington State Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

News: On April 19, 2001, Washington Governor Gary Locke signed SSB 5497, exempting CREP contract holders from the state's Forest Practices Act.

[CREP Biological Opinion](#)

[Washington State CREP Fact Sheet](#)

[Washington State Conservation Commission](#)

What areas in Washington State are included in the program?

- The project area consists of all streams in Washington across agricultural crop and marginal pasture lands where riparian habitat is a limiting factor for salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act.
- It is estimated that there are several thousand miles of such streams.
- The program provides for enrollment of up to 100,000 acres that will generally consist of riparian buffers up to 180 feet in width.

What are the benefits of the Washington State CREP?

- CREP will provide a number of significant environmental benefits to Washington State and to its salmon.
- The establishment of forested riparian buffers will help restructure streams and increase the availability of insects and other salmon food.
- Trees along streams will provide shade and reduce the rate of solar water heating. Riparian buffers will reduce pollution and improve stream water quality.

What CREP benefits are available?

- Under CREP, participants can earn annual rental payments for the life of the contract.
- Rental payments are determined based on soil type.
- The annual rental payments also include annual maintenance rates, as well as incentive payments equaling 100% to 110% of the weighted average soil rental rate.
- Incentive payments are 100%, unless the land is located in an area designated under the State Growth Management Act, in which case, the incentive is 110%. Cost-share assistance of 100% of eligible costs is available for establishing trees and shrubs, site preparation, erecting livestock fences, etc.

Basic land eligibility criteria.

- Your land must be located along a qualifying stream or other water body.
- The land must be suitable for use as a pasture in order to qualify, as

well as suitable for the establishment of a riparian buffer.

- Upon application, you will indicate the area you would like to commit to CREP, and a technician from NRCS or the Conservation District will visit the property with you, and determine whether it is eligible.
- If you are using the area for grazing of livestock, when your final contract is approved, the livestock must be removed from the area. Grazing is not allowed for the period of time the land is in CREP.